

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1064

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, GY, EAGR

SUBJECT: SUGAR STRIKE SHOWS SIGNS OF EASING

REF: GEORGETOWN 0477

1. ONE WEEK AFTER OPENING SESSION OF ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL ON APRIL 4 (REFTEL), STRIKE BY UNRECOGNIZED GUYANA AGRICULTURAL WORKERS UNION (GAWU), LABOR ARMOF OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP), SEEMS TO BE LOSING EFFECTIVENESS. STRIKE HAD SERIOUSLY SLOWED SUGAR INDUSTRY PRODUCTIONS SINCE BEGINNING OF MARCH. HOWEVER DURING PERIOD FROM APRIL 5 THRU APRIL 10, SUGAR INDUSTRY PRODUCTION ROSE TO FIVE THOUSAND TONS, MORE THAN HALF NORMAL WEEKLY PRODUCTION FIGURE FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR AND HIGHEST TOTAL SINCE STRIKE BEGAN.

2. GRADUAL RETURN TO WORK BY FIELD AND FACTORY WORKERS THIS WEEK WAS BALANCED BY SOLIDARITY STRIKE BY CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL, CLERICAL, AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES (NAACIE). GOVT AND INDUSTRY SOURCES AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT NAACIE STRIKE WILL HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON PRODUCTION

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AS MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL FILL IN FOR STRIKING WORKERS.

3. ON SATURDAY, APRIL 12, GUYANA SUGAR PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION (GSPA) AND RECOGNIZED UNION MANPOWER CITIZENS ASSOCIATION (MPCA) ARE SCHEDULED TO PRESENT MEMORANDA TO ARBITRATOR VICTOR CRANE. THESE MEMORANDA WILL BE DISCUSSED AT SECOND FORMAL SESSION OF ARBITRATION TRIBUNAL ON MONDAY, APRIL 14. IT IS EXPECTED THAT GSPA WILL AGREE TO MAKE INTERIM PAY INCREASE TO WORKERS TO FURTHER ENCOURAGE BACK TO WORK MOVE.

4. ASSUMING RETURN TO WORK, SUGAR INDUSTRY SOURCE NOW ESTIMATES UNOFFICIALLY THAT SPRING CROP PRODUCTION WILL BE ABOUT 100,000 TONS, INSTEAD OF 143,000 TONS ORIGINAL TARGET. EFFORTS TO MAKE UP LOST PRODUCTION DUE TO STRIKE WILL BE ONLY PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE OF LOST "OPPORTUNITY DAYS" (DAYS IN WHICH NO RAIN FELL THEREBY INCREASING PROBABILITY OF RAIN DURING REMAINING DAYS OF HARVEST.

5. COMMENT: AS HARDSHIPS OF CONTINUING STRIKE AND LACK OF CLEAR STRIKE OBJECTIVES CAUSE MORE AND MORE WORKERS TO DRIFT BACK TO JOBS, GAWU HONORARY LEADER AND PPP LEADER CHEDDI JAGAN MAYBE FORCED TO CALL TEMPORARY HALT TO STRIKE AND LOOK FOR OTHER TACTICS TO DISRUPT SUGAR INDUSTRY AND ATTACK GOVT.
KREBS

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